Sirens : Who were they and what happened? The Whole Storyb

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Summary :

The story of the sirens is magical not only to me, but also to the people of today. Besides the fact that the tales depict them as irresistible melodious creatures that made sailors commit suicide by diving into the water to find the sirens that are singing, they are also portrayed as dangerous. This topic of the article is the sirens and I, the author, discusses their origins, theories on why they killed, the symbolism behind sirens, and the interpretations in Greek mythology and the world beside it. By means of Historical texts, literary pieces like The Odyssey by Homer, and cultural theories. Furthermore, this research project focuses on the appearance of sirens in ancient books and on their modern heritage.

Introduction :

One of the most identifiable figures in Greek Mythology are sirens that are often depicted as beautiful yet deadly and sinister beings that seduce sailors with their voices and kill them. The study is exploring the personalities of sirens, the changes in their images, theories on the reasoning on why they kill sailors, and ways in which their symbolism had been extended, not only into the contempary interpretations but even to biblical references.

Results :

- *Description and Appearance :*

Sirens were initially depicted as half bird, half woman, where the head of the siren would be a woman's head and the body of the siren would be a bird. However, New accounts portrayed them to have a mermaid-like appearance with a mermaid tail.

- *The siren's voices:*

The voice of a siren is melodious and hard to believe but it is almost a supernatural sound. The voices of a siren is beautiful yet dangerous. In the past, sirens were portrayed as beings that had a goal to kill sailors by luring them with their sweet voices, but in the course of time, people portrayed the sirens as

consequences for sailors diving in the water without thinking, bringing themes of desire and lust.

- *How did sirens kill sailors?*

On the islands the sailors would visit, The sirens would sing a melodious song that would tempt the sailors. The sailors would dive in the water in search of these sirens without thinking about the consequences, ultimately leading to their deaths. This would be how sirens killed sailors. The sailors would never return from these islands, for they would be dead.

- *What would be the reason behind the sirens killing sailors?*

There are many theories suggesting the reasons why sirens were obsessed with luring sailors and killing them. Some theories portray their actions were due to a curse, a desire for revenge, or a longing for a heroic man to accompany them on these islands. According to Greek Mythology, some myths explain that Demeter, the goddess of agriculture, cursed the sirens for not protecting her daughter, Persephone, from being kidnapped by Hades. The curse states that the sirens would only live until mortals could pass by them without being lured to their island. Another theory suggests that sirens lured sailors as revenge for taking and tying women onto their ships. Some interpretations also suggest they killed because they enjoyed watching people suffer, and were cannibalistic.

- *Did sirens target men specifically?*

The sirens didn’t specifically target men to lure and kill. They lured and killed all sailors, regardless of gender. The mostfamous example of siren stories are ‘The Odyssey’ by Homer. There stories involve male sailors, but that doesn’t mean sirens specifically targeted men. It simply reflects the focus of killing the victims who decided to come to the island they reside in. The myth’s focus is on the dangerous nature of their songs and their ability to ensnare their victims and kill them. According to some theories, sirens kill men, not women. These theories state that they are a metaphor of the consequences of a man acting on his sexual impulses without thinking, and if that’s the case, men would be lured easily by the sirens dangerous voices and dive in without thinking about the consequences, leading to them dying on the island.

- *Did male sirens exist?*

According to Greek Mythology , sirens were always females. Nowhere in the ancient stories, there were any piece of information that would suggest that there were male sirens. The representation of some basic natural functions, symbols of danger and seduction, was almost entirely due to the fact that they were female. Although there were male marine creatures, like triton, who was a

merman and the son of Poseidon, They didn’t posses the same traits and was almost never considered a siren. The sirens were the most legitimate candidates for the symbol of womens power, that is the beauty of power and seduction.If we see it from another conception, it is possible to imagine that there were male sirens in fairy tales or folklore, but there is no clear evidence to prove the point that male sirens ever existed.

- *Lineage : The daughter of Achelous*

Sirens were considered the daughters of the river God, Achelous and a muse in Greek mythology. The reason sirens were portrayed as the daughter of Achelous were because he had connections to the sea and their alluring song-like nature. The muses were often Goddesses that were associated with poetry, music, and art. They were often described as the daughters of these muses, highlighting their melodic nature.

- *The Odyssey, by Homer :*

The first siren was discovered in the new translation of Homer’s Odyssey, Probably around 750 BCE. The poet of ‘The Odyssey’ was Homer, An ancient Greek poet that historians discovered had another work called ‘The Iliad’. In Homer’s book, The Odyssey, he explains that Odysseus, advised by Circe, orders his men to plug their ears with earplugs or beeswax to prevent them from hearing the siren’s song and being lured to death

“Therefore pass these sirens by, and stop your men’s ears with wax that none of them may hear.”

- *What happened in The Odysssey?*

In ‘The Odyssey’, by Homer, Odysseus orders his men to plug their ears with beeswax to prevent them from hearing the sirens voices. He also commands his crew to tie him to the mast of the ship, and gives orders to not untie him no matter what he says or what the circumstance is. Just as the ship comes near the sirens, they sing beautifully. Odysseus screams to be untied, but his crew didn’t hear him due to the earplugs, and in the end, they successfully navigated the island without one of them being killed.

- *When was the cease of the sirens?*

The ending of the sirens occurred when Odysseus and his crew successfully navigated through the island without one of them getting lured and killed by the sirens. Odysseus heard the sirens song without being lured. Having failed to lure and entice Odysseus and his crew, the sirens, filled with despair, drowned themselves in the sea. They were said to have committed suicide after Odysseus

passed theirisland, fulfilling the prophecy that they would die if anyone heard their song and lived.

- *The Bible and the sirens – is there any connection?*

Isaiah 13;22 mentions sirens in the verse:

“and owls shall answer on another there, in the houses thereof, and sirens in the temples of pleasure”

Some older translations of the Bible mention creatures resembling sirens in Isaiah 13:22, often poetically interpreted as spirits or wild animals that reside in forests. However, mainstream translations do not explicitly reference sirens as in Greek mythology. Hence, there is no direct, clear biblical evidence of sirens as those in Greek mythology.

Discussion :

Sirens are symbols that reflect the nature of attraction and death and they also represent danger and seductiveness. It’s a reminder that not all beautiful voices are sweet, and that some can be deadly. The way they are depicted has changed from real dangers t figurative characters in poetry, religion, art etc. throughout history. The fact that they have existed for so long points to the fact that the myths have fascinated people for generations.

Methods I, the author, used for this research project:

This research project was performed through examining and summarizing the primary texts and the theories about sirens in mythology, literature and religion. Cross fact checking was used for this paper. Websites such as *THEOI GREEK MYTHOLOGY* and *REDDIT* also helped me to fact check my work and present it clearly and correctly. I used no AI tools for this research paper and would be willing to share my rough draft upon request.

References :

- *THEOI GREEK MYTHOLOGY.*
- *REDDIT*
- Graves, Robert. *THE GREEK MYTHS*. Penguin books, 2011
- Homer. *THE ODYSSEY.* Translated by Robert Fagles, Penguin Books, 1996
- *BIBLE GATEWAY PASSAGE.* Isaiah 13:22.

AUTHORS NOTE : The tables with captions, figures, and figure captions, and the appendix (NA) is not there because I think that these are for science research projects (as shown in the manuscript template) and not interdisciplinary. If b